

Las Vegas Sustainability Joint Workshop

The Las Vegas City Council and Planning Commission held a joint workshop on August 27, 2007, regarding sustainability. The purpose of the workshop was to achieve a common understanding of the issues surrounding sustainability and determine the level of attention that should be focused on sustainability policy.

The city's sustainability policy is based on the 1987 Brundtland Commission definition, "Sustainable Development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

The City Council and Planning Commission received presentations from several professional leaders and staff members covering a broad



The City Council and Planning Commissioners' joint workshop generates focused direction for city staff.

range of subjects about sustainability. Deputy City Manager Steve Houchens and Planning & Development Deputy Director Tom Perrigo, AICP, provided an introduction to the subject and set the stage for those that followed.

The City Council in 2006 identified three priorities within its Strategic Plan that address sustainability and drive the city's actions and initiatives:

- Create, integrate, and manage orderly and sustainable development and growth of our community.
- Manage cost and revenue resources to achieve efficient operations.
- Support and encourage sustainability, livability, and pride in our neighborhoods.

Some of the actions and programs in place are:

- CELEBRATE – City Employees Lowering Energy By Recycling And Tracking Efficiency.
- Fleet operations.
- Traffic signal conversions.
- Green Building program.

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<http://www.nationalgeographic.com>

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- Climate Protection Resolution.
- 50 percent reduction of energy use at the water treatment plant.
- Methane recovery at the waste treatment plant.
- New city buildings will be built to the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Silver standard or equivalent.
- Union Park enrolled in the Pilot LEED Neighborhood Development program.

In each case the city is using resources more efficiently while saving taxpayer dollars. As a result of these and other actions, Sustainlane has ranked the city 27th among the largest 50 cities in the country for sustainability.

Blueprint for Las Vegas

Windom Kimsey, AIA, chaired the "Blueprint for Las Vegas," the 24-hour town hall meeting attended by architects, engineers and urban planning professionals as well as elected and community leaders. They examined sustainability through many perspectives including resources, planning and transportation. They recommended goals to reduce energy and water use by:

- 25 percent reduction in energy and water use by 2015.
- 50 percent by 2020.
- 75 percent by 2025.
- net zero by 2030.

The "blueprint" also recommends developing a regional "overlay" of sustainable policies that are upheld by and vest more authority in the Southern Nevada Regional Planning Coalition. It suggests creating pre-zoned districts fostering infill development and mixed, cluster development for Bureau of Land Management land disposals to preclude potential reverse or down zoning. It also suggests adopting "form-based" zoning

standards and developing modified roadway standards based on holistic multi-functional objectives.

Sustainability through Community Design

Planning Manager Flinn Fagg, AICP, presented the role that urban design plays in creating a sustainable city that encourages compact, walkable neighborhoods with shopping, recreation, services and workplaces nearby or within easy access to transit options. The city of Las Vegas has a long history of sustainability policy beginning with the Las Vegas 2020 Master Plan, based on smart growth principles and envisions more density, walkability and easy-to-commute neighborhoods featuring mixed-use and transit oriented development.

Assistant City Traffic Engineer John Ridilla, P.E. & P.T.O.E., presented the role that transportation design has on achieving sustainability by:

- Using transportation modes that are energy efficient such as mass transit, cycling and walking.
- Improving the efficient use of cars through design, car pooling and better trip planning.
- Laying out our cities to bring people and their uses closer together.
- Developing policies that allow and promote these options.

Ridilla provided information on the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) "Ace" system routes in downtown Las Vegas and along Boulder Highway to Henderson being constructed by the Southern Nevada Regional Transportation Commission (RTC).

Polly Carolin, FAICP, from the RTC, presented information about Transit Oriented Development (TOD). TOD is moderate to higher density development, often mixed-use, that is within walking distance of a major transit stop. It can be new construction or redevelopment of one or more buildings whose design and orientation facilitate

transit use. Generally, TOD has a mix of residential, employment and shopping opportunities that is designed for pedestrians without excluding the automobile. Transit oriented development is a choice not an outcome – residents can choose driving or taking public transit to work, because both are convenient. People working in offices and commercial areas can choose to live in the TOD, so they can walk to work and/or TOD residents can choose to shop and dine somewhere nearby.

Green Building

Deepika Padam, AIA, presented information about the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) and the LEED certification and accreditation programs. USGBC is a coalition of the country's foremost leaders from across the building industry. USGBC promotes buildings that are environmentally responsible, economically profitable and healthy places to live and work. The USGBC defines "green building" as design and construction practices that meet specified standards, resolving much of the negative impact of buildings on their occupants and on the environment. There are four LEED levels – platinum, gold, silver and LEED.

Rita Brandin with Newland Communities presented the recently announced inclusion of Union Park in the pilot LEED Neighborhood Development (ND) program. Union Park is the high-density, mixed-use development located on 61 acres just west of the Union Pacific Railroad tracks. The LEED ND program is based on:

- Smart location.
- Linkage to the community at large.
- Green construction and technology.
- Neighborhood pattern and design.
- Water and energy conservation.

The feedback generated from the pilot program, which will run from 2007-2009, will be the basis for setting the criteria and ratings of LEED ND projects. There

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Planning & Development Deputy Director Tom Perrigo greets attendees of the sustainability workshop.

are 238 projects in 39 cities located in seven countries enrolled in the pilot program.

Keynote Speaker

Michael Kinsley with the Rocky Mountain Institute presented “whole system thinking,” which means to integrate community, economic and environmental factors as a synonym for sustainability. It is not about balancing community, economy and the environment, but integrating them. Long term implications of policies are considered as well as the inter-relationships among factors involved in the decision-making process. Whole system thinking is about results, not ideology. It includes considering the relationship among sites along with green building design and sustainable site design.

Whole system thinking applied to development can generate multiple benefits from a single investment. An example to consider is the installation of a tree-lined streetscape and narrowing a street. One may consider the potential cost of moving fewer cars through the street or also consider that slower

speeds could result in increased safety for drivers and pedestrians. Lower temperatures, reduced energy in adjacent buildings, increased property values, more comfortable walking environment, desirable retail location, increased oxygen production, reduced soil erosion, greenhouse gas absorption, water run-off management and increased occupancy rates may also result.

Applying risk management practices through whole system thinking and sustainability reduces exposure to rising energy costs, federal carbon regulation, and results in skilled, educated workers that are attracted to healthy, sustainable cities and organizations. Sustainability is not only the right thing to do, but it is the fiscally sound thing to do.

Kinsley also suggested that growth be reconsidered by its two types – development and expansion. Expansion grows the physical limits of a city making it bigger, usually through costly, low density suburban subdivisions at the edge of the built city. Development invests in the city’s assets to make it more productive, valuable, desirable and enriching. Conventional growth (expansion) can be moderated with cluster development, infill, mixed land-uses, traditional design and multiple transportation options.

Kinsley also suggested that institutional programs drive suburban development further into the desert countryside and could be considered land use subsidies. He cited examples of federal subsidies on gasoline, highway development and home mortgage tax exemption that encourage single-family

homeownership that increase distances from homes, jobs and services. New community street, parking and subdivision design requirements that accommodate and encourage automobile use raise the question whether existing taxpayers are subsidizing expansion.

Next Steps

A number of comments and suggestions were made during presentations and the facilitated discussion that followed. Based on participant input, a number of actions have been developed for implementation within six months:

- Adopt a sustainability plan.
- Evaluate fiscal and environmental costs of expansion.
- Draft code revisions and design standards in support of compact, mixed use, transit oriented development.
- Evaluate mandates and incentives for green building standards.
- Educate homebuyers on benefits of green building.
- Establish a city of Las Vegas tree planting program.
- Adopt a heat island mitigation plan.
- Prepare report of city of Las Vegas Best Practices.

Sustainability will be fully integrated into the Las Vegas city government in three ways: first through its regulatory authority over land development (land use, zoning codes, building codes, development agreements, land development standards), franchise agreements with utilities, and infrastructure development; secondly by addressing the

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City Seeking Public Input

The city of Las Vegas Planning & Development Department has prepared three draft plan elements, Parks & Recreation, Public Buildings, and Transit, that will be considered by the Planning Commission on October 25, 2007. Upon

final approval by the City Council, these elements will be added to the city’s Las Vegas 2020 Master Plan which must be included and updated regularly per state law.

The department wishes to invite the

public to review the drafts and submit their comments that will be included in the information provided to the commission. The public may also attend the Planning Commission meeting on October 25, 2007, at 6 p.m. to present their comments directly to the commission. To review and comment, please visit:

www.lasvegasnevada.gov/planning.



City Updates its Historic Preservation Plan



Las Vegas Academy.



U.S. Post Office and Courthouse.

The Las Vegas City Council adopted the Historic Properties Preservation Plan Element at its September 5, 2007, meeting. This element, part of the Las Vegas 2020 Master Plan, guides the city's historic preservation efforts with standards, goals, objectives and policies. The city has many buildings, objects, districts and sites that have historic, archaeological, cultural and/or architectural significance. The city has made it a priority to preserve these resources as a "living" part of the community, not just in text and photographs.

The original Historic Preservation Element was adopted as part of the city of Las Vegas General Plan on April 1, 1992. Since that time, no amendments have been made to it, while many new concepts regarding the broadened role of historic preservation in the city have arisen.

The planning process for the update was guided by a task force

that was formed to identify where improvements were needed in the 1992 plan, establish goals and objectives and address applicable standards. The task force was comprised of two essential groups; a technical advisory committee of historic preservation professionals and a city staff committee representing multiple departments.

The plan now includes:

- Integration with the city's Las Vegas 2020 Master Plan.
- The city's current inventory of historic buildings, sites and districts with added consideration for historic signs.
- Discussion of new issues in historic preservation, including historic building codes, Smart Growth and sustainability, cultural heritage tourism, the federal environmental review process and the preservation of resources from the recent past.

Las Vegas' historic properties enhance the city's character and ambience, creating an authentic experience for both residents and visitors. Rehabilitating and reusing older buildings advances the city's economic development and conserves natural resources used in new construction. The plan element will be updated every five years.

The historic preservation element provides:

- A brief history of Las Vegas, and an overview of significant historic resources.
- An explanation of the historic preservation process.
- An outline of the city's goals, objectives and policies for historic preservation.
- A plan for implementation.

The Historic Preservation Plan Element may be viewed on the city's Web site at www.lasvegasnevada.gov/hpc or may be purchased at the Development Services Center located at 731 S. Fourth Street, Las Vegas, NV 89101.

More Historic Neon Signs for Las Vegas Boulevard



The Horseshoe and Silver Slipper neon signs are destined to enliven Las Vegas Boulevard North.

The historic Horseshoe and Silver Slipper neon signs will soon be placed in their new home above Las Vegas Boulevard along the Cultural Corridor in downtown Las Vegas. The Las Vegas Centennial Committee on August 13, 2007, approved \$420,000 to have two iconic neon signs restored and installed.

The two signs were offered by the Neon Museum for this project and will be restored to their former glory and located on the Las Vegas Boulevard median in the Cultural Corridor area of downtown Las Vegas by April 2008.

This project supports the Downtown Las Vegas Boulevard Scenic Byway Corridor Management Plan that was adopted by the City Council on April 6, 2004. The plan calls for the restoration of historic neon signs and their placement on Las Vegas Boulevard. When the plan is complete, there will be restored iconic neon signs along the entire length of the byway from Sahara Avenue to Washington Avenue.

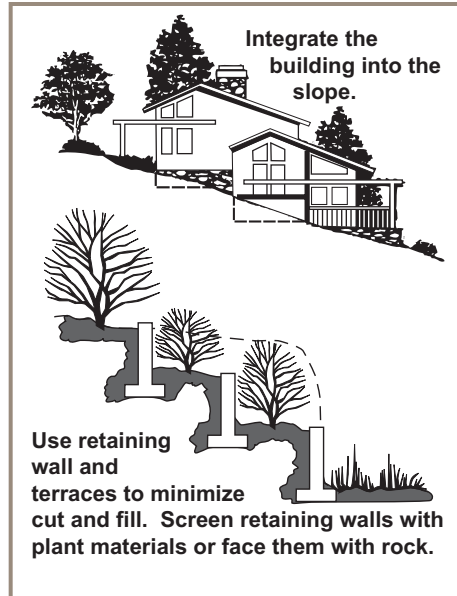
For additional information on the Downtown Las Vegas Boulevard Scenic Byway, please contact Yorgo Kagafas, AICP, at 229-6196.



Growth Merits Hillside Guidelines

Until now, Title 19 of the Las Vegas zoning code did not provide development standards for areas of steep slope and rugged topography. The hillside ordinance sponsored by Councilman Larry Brown was approved by the City Council on August 14, 2007, as ordinance 5923. New codes were needed to provide a basis for review of projects and to guide development where unique situations arise from the slope of the land.

The city developed its hillside ordinance from the study and evaluation of similar regulations in Clark County, Henderson and other comparable cities in topography and climate. The ordinance establishes development standards on slopes of 15 percent or more, and allows the staff of the Planning & Development Department to review site development plan review (SDR) applications for hillside development



Examples of how the guidelines illustrate development on slopes of 15 percent or greater.

on a case by case basis. The Hillside Standards and Guidelines are located in Title 19.06, "Special Purpose and Overlay Districts."

Minimizing slope disturbance preserves and protects the natural and visual resources and the unique environmental features and systems of the hillsides. Hillside development also must address

the challenges of potentially hazardous conditions, such as flooding, erosion, landslides and fires, in order to protect lives and property. Provision of streets, water, sewer, emergency services, sanitation services, parks and recreation to hillside areas must also be addressed.

The required standards in the new code ensure an acceptable level of quality and safeguard against creating environmental hazards. There are specific requirements relative to steepness of slope, building height, fences/walls, preservation of natural areas, landscaping, architectural requirements for building design, clustered development and access roads and widths. Grading design requirements have been established by restricting the amount of allowable land disturbance to maintain appropriate drainage and natural area. The siting of buildings must take into consideration the preservation of ridgeline views and the surrounding natural vistas. Building on ridgelines is prohibited.

To view the ordinance, go to the August 14, 2007, City Council meeting agenda at www.lasvegasnevada.gov.

Planning Commissioner Goynes Receives 'Citizen Planner' Award

Las Vegas Planning Commissioner Byron Goynes recently received the Sheldon D. Gerber Merit Award for Excellence in Environmental Planning – Citizen Planner at the annual Western Planner Conference held in Dickinson, North Dakota in August 2007. The Western Planner organization is comprised of American Planning Association chapters and sections in 12 western states, excluding California.

Goynes was honored for his commitment to community planning for the city of Las Vegas and his contributions to the city's Northwest Open Space Plan adopted in 2005, the new Traditional Neighborhood Development land-use category adopted in 2006, the small wind energy systems ordinance adopted in late 2006 and his advocacy for the inclusion of open space within planned developments.

Goynes' leadership in mass transit was also recognized. He has worked professionally in the field of transit for the last seven years, which has included directing the mystery rider and customers with disabilities programs. His expertise about transit issues such as density along routes, bus turnouts and trail linkages to transit

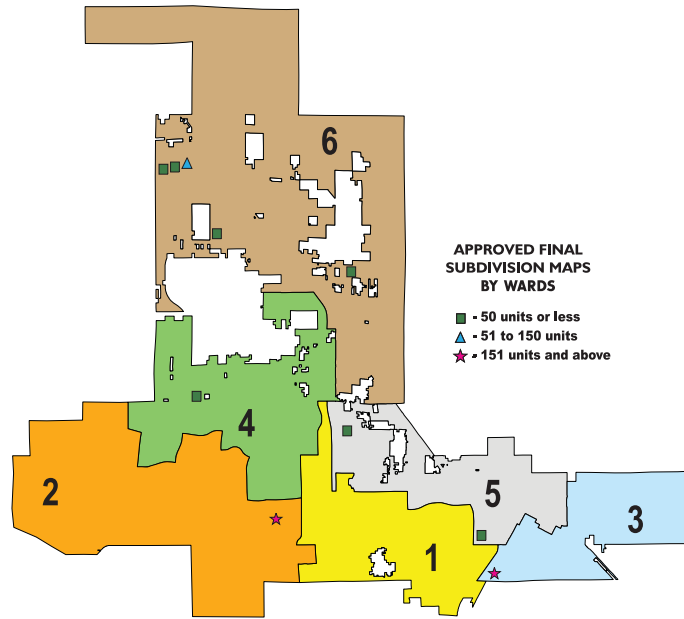


Commissioner Byron Goynes honored as "Citizen Planner" at the Western Planners Conference.

routes is valued by his fellow planning commissioners.

Goynes has served as an appointed planning official of the city of Las Vegas

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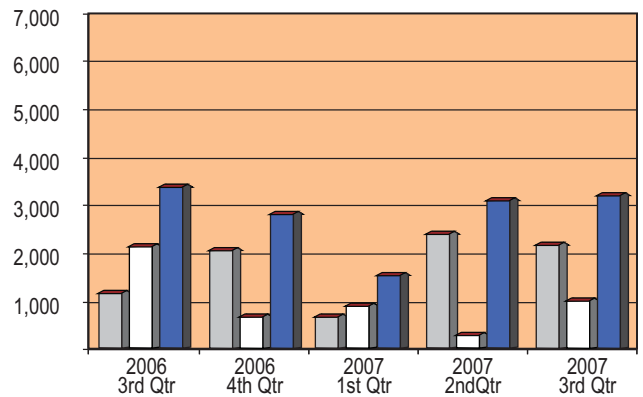
Leading Economic Indicators For Clark County

"The performance of the Index Indicators is yet another month of modest change. The Index is down for August by -0.11 percent. Seven of the series contributed negatively to the index; and, six of the series were down over year-ago levels. In short, the Index has tracked along a flat plateau for the past month or so, with small percentage changes. All in all, southern Nevada is in a stall, caught between the drag of a weak housing market and the strength of Strip construction."

Source: UNLV Center for Business and Economic Research

■ Tentative □ Final Maps ■ Total

Approved Subdivision Lots



Source: city of Las Vegas

Approved Subdivision Lots

	Tentative Maps	Final Maps	Total
3rd Qtr-2006	1,261	2,250	3,511
4th Qtr-2006	2,175	767	2,942
1st Qtr-2007	603	892	1,495
2nd Qtr-2007	2,444	636	3,080
3rd Qtr-2007	1,744	814	2,558
% Chg Last Qtr	-28.6	28.0	-16.9
% Chg Last Year	38.3	-63.8	-27.1

Leading Economic Indicators

CLARK COUNTY SERIES	DATE	UNITS	LATEST PERIOD	CHANGE PREVIOUS PERIOD	CHANGE YEAR AGO	CONTRIBUTION TO INDEX *
RESIDENTIAL BUILDING						
Units Permitted	Jun-07	#Units Permitted	1,729	-3.35%	-53.37%	-0.016%
Permit Valuation	Jun-07	Dollars	\$ 246,195,317	13.17%	-43.72%	-0.028%
COMMERCIAL BUILDING						
Permits	Jun-07	#Units Permitted	80	-33.33%	-34.43%	-0.003%
Permit Valuation	Jun-07	Dollars	\$ 58,578,268	-84.56%	-67.39%	-0.028%
TAXABLE SALES	Jun-07	Dollars	\$ 3,238,798,689	6.27%	-0.14%	-0.013%
McCARRAN AIRPORT	Jun-07	Passengers Enplaned/Deplaned	4,157,017	-0.32%	6.89%	0.056%
GALLONS OF GASOLINE	Jun-07	Thousands of Gallons	67,806,389	-2.05%	2.75%	0.075%
GROSS GAMING REVENUE	Jun-07	Dollars	\$ 789,656,398	-18.46%	6.09%	-0.250%
CONVENTIONS HELD						
Visitor Volume	Jun-07	People	3,282,315	-2.91%	3.96%	0.093%
Attendance	Jun-07	People	429,804	-15.09%	-13.68%	-0.000%
OVERALL CHANGE IN LEADING INDICATOR **	Aug-07		133.18	-0.11%	0.18%	-0.11%

* The contribution to the index is a net-weighted average of each series after adjustment for seasonal variation.

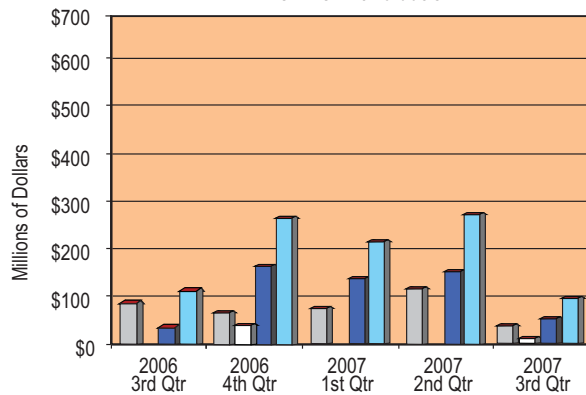
** The index is a six month forecast (December 1, 2007) from the month of the data (June 1, 2007) and four months from the month of the series (August 1, 2007).

Source: UNLV Center for Business and Economic Research



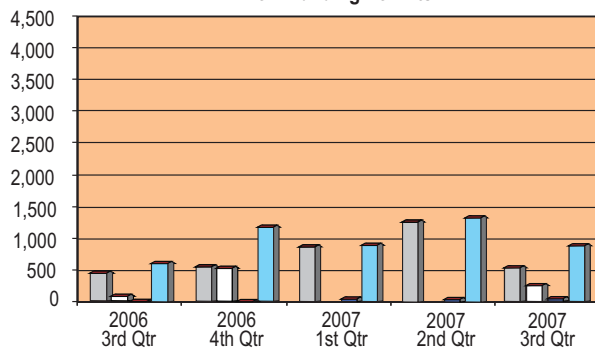
Single Family
 Multi-Family
 Commercial
 Total

New Permit Valuation



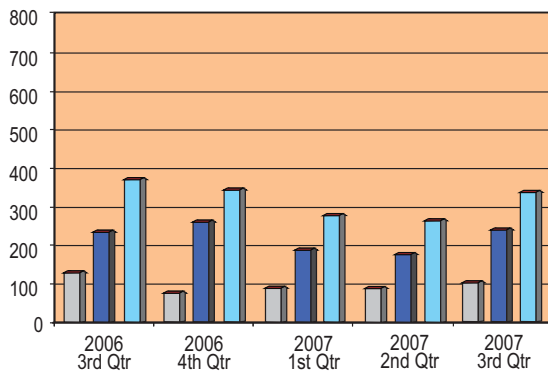
New Permit Valuation				
	Single Family	Multi-Family	Commercial	Total
3rd Qtr-2006	\$ 63,346,600	\$ 15,812,649	\$ 41,240,464	\$120,399,713
4th Qtr-2006	\$ 64,426,957	\$ 37,683,675	\$163,286,302	\$265,396,934
1st Qtr-2007	\$ 77,682,315	-	\$136,901,985	\$214,584,300
2nd Qtr-2007	\$118,454,694	-	\$152,334,473	\$270,789,167
3rd Qtr-2007	\$ 34,566,553	\$ 9,239,416	\$ 50,737,675	\$ 94,543,644
% Chg Last Qtr	-70.8	100.0	-66.7	-65.1
% Chg Last Year	-45.4	-41.6	23.0	-21.5

New Building Permits



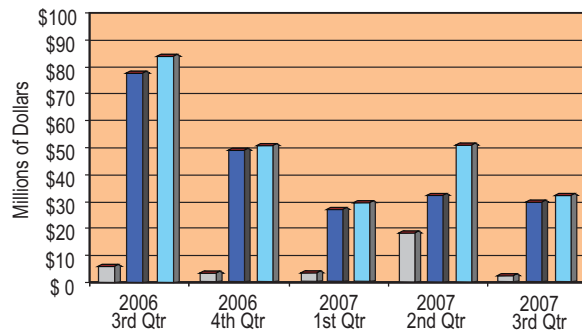
New Building Permits				
	Single Family	Multi-Family	Commercial	Total
3rd Qtr-2006	487	125	45	657
4th Qtr-2006	476	457	40	973
1st Qtr-2007	687	-	25	712
2nd Qtr-2007	991	-	36	1,027
3rd Qtr-2007	263	127	35	425
% Chg Last Qtr	-73.5	0.0	-2.8	-58.6
% Chg Last Year	-46.0	100.0	-22.2	-35.3

Additions and Remodels



Additions and Remodels			
	Single Family	Commercial	Total
3rd Qtr-2006	128	227	355
4th Qtr-2006	78	251	329
1st Qtr-2007	86	177	263
2nd Qtr-2007	131	228	359
3rd Qtr-2007	99	238	337
% Chg Last Qtr	15.1	34.5	28.1
% Chg Last Year	-22.7	4.8	-5.1

Additions and Remodel Valuation



Additions and Remodel Valuation			
	Single Family	Commercial	Total
3rd Qtr-2006	\$ 6,245,816	\$ 78,874,807	\$ 85,120,623
4th Qtr-2006	\$ 2,466,733	\$ 48,425,365	\$ 50,892,098
1st Qtr-2007	\$ 2,930,470	\$ 26,569,075	\$ 29,499,545
2nd Qtr-2007	\$ 5,232,608	\$ 30,275,459	\$ 35,508,067
3rd Qtr-2007	\$ 2,630,430	\$ 29,762,596	\$ 32,393,026
% Chg Last Qtr	-49.7	-1.7	-8.8
% Chg Last Year	-57.9	-62.3	-61.9

Source: city of Las Vegas (including subdivision information)



Councilman Larry Brown Ward 4

City of Las Vegas Ward 4 Councilman Larry Brown has represented the northwest area of the city since 1997. He currently serves on the boards of the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority, the Clark County Regional Transportation Commission, the Clark County Regional Flood Control District, the Clean Water Coalition, the Nevada League of Cities and on the Metro Fiscal Affairs Committee.

During his tenure on the City Council, Brown has focused on strengthening public safety, creating more parks, trails and open space and increasing accountability by identifying where and why tax dollars are being spent during the budget process. "Representing and interacting with the citizens of Ward 4 is most rewarding," Brown said. "Helping to shape the city's quality of life is a privilege and responsibility I'm honored to have."

Brown was born and raised in the Boston, Mass. area and received his



Councilman Larry Brown has worked to strengthen public safety, create more parks, trails and open space, and increase fiscal accountability.

bachelor's degree in Government from Harvard University. In November of 1999, he was inducted into the Harvard Athletic Hall of Fame for his collegiate career in football and baseball. Brown was a professional baseball player, playing his final years with the hometown "Las Vegas Stars."

Councilman Brown is married to Celeste and they have three children. He is an active member of many civic and charitable organizations. He is deeply involved in youth sports and enjoys golf and reading.

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internal day-to-operations of the city government and its facilities to reduce energy use and other national resources; and lastly through the city's community outreach communications and also

forming a committee of persons representing a broad spectrum of interested groups to educate, raise awareness and spread sustainability throughout the community.

PLANNING COMMISSIONER GOYNES – CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

for 15 years. He was appointed to the city of Las Vegas Board of Zoning Adjustment (BZA) in 1992, serving in that position for eight years. In 2000, he was appointed to the Planning Commission and is the current vice-chairman.

The Planning & Development Department also submitted and received honorable mention for the Floyd Lamb Park at Tule Springs Master Plan for the Sheldon D. Gerber Merit Award for Excellence in Environmental Planning.

Las Vegas GROWTH WATCH



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